

A
L E T T E R

TO THE

REVEREND MR. D—,

BY A LAYMAN.

1775.

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REV. SIR.

As, of late, I have not attended upon your ministry so constantly as heretofore; and as I have some ground to think that you judge me to be guilty of a fault in absenting myself, you will permit me to assign a reason in justification of my conduct.

You are very sensible, sir, that you and I differ very much in our religious opinions; so much, indeed, that I have heard you declare, that a person who thinks as I do, is, on that account, *excluded from salvation*. Such a declaration, however, affects me but little; knowing well, that the great and good God hath never so declared; and therefore esteeming

the sentence of any frail and fallible man as a thing of little moment. Though, by the way, it seems no trifling affair, with respect to the person himself, who places himself in the seat of judgment, and pronounces condemnation on his brother for his opinions. This man had need look well to his authority. And how if, in the end, it should appear that the party so condemned, is one whom God *approves*? But to return:—The wide difference in our sentiments, of necessity, prevents my gaining that profit from your ministry, which I would heartily wish to gain: and thus the principal design of public worship is defeated. How should I be *profited* by what I am *shocked* and *grieved* to hear?—by that which the reverence which I owe to the ever blessed God obliges me to regard without abhorrence?—that at which I am really ashamed to be shocked and grieved *no more*; as, indeed, I should be, if I had such a sense of God upon my mind as I ought to have. Yet although I think so ill of your tenets, considered in themselves, believing your *sincerity* unquestionable, I do, at the same time, account you a good and a worthy man. Such is every man, who, according to his best judgment, practises what is right and good. Sincerity, sir, is the *chief thing* in religion. You would think it so in a matter between you and your friend. And why not in religion? Because, say you, the great God doth not judge as man judges. Now, as I apprehend this to be a capital mistake, I will examine it a little; and

and what I shall say of it will be no improper introduction to what follows.

And surely, if the great God did not judge of good and evil as we judge, he would never have made this appeal to the wicked Israelites. "O house of Israel! are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal?"—It will be readily granted, that the thoughts and ways of the deity are, in one respect, far above our thoughts, and our ways. It would be very strange if it were not so. The divine mind, seeing the whole compass of truth, and acting even to the extremest bounds of the universe, consequently sees and acts upon reasons unknown to us. But, as all truth is *consistent*, that which is unknown to us cannot be *opposite* and *contradictory* to that which is known. Shall we, then, say we know *nothing*? In this case would not our own hearts testify the falsity of our assertion? Shall we say that human reason was so totally perverted by the fall, that it only deceives us? And shall we *prove* this too? But how? Shall we prove by *reason* that reason is *deceitful*? The attempt has often been made: but certainly no absurdity can be more gross. Shall we prove it by scripture? But suppose we are asked, "have you any good *reason* to think the genuine sense of the scripture is such?" What shall we answer? If we say *no*; in this case will not our consciences condemn us, for *receiving* such doctrine as the genuine sense of scripture. If we say *yes*; is it not, then, manifest

that, in judging of the sense of scripture, we are determined by *reason*? And thus is it not manifest, that the scriptural proof of *reason's deceitfulness*, is ultimately derived from *deceitful reason itself*? It is undeniably: and consequently such proof is *deceitful proof*, and cannot be depended upon. If we *do* depend upon it, in so doing we declare that *reason* is *not* deceitful, in direct opposition to the very tenet which we were intending to establish. Pray attend to this. Indeed, sir, it is very melancholy, to consider how men have confounded and perverted a reasonable nature. However, notwithstanding all that has been urged to the contrary, it is abundantly evident, that we are endowed with capacities *to judge* aright, (within certain limits) even as the great God himself judges, concerning good and evil*. It is true we may *incapacitate* ourselves, and then put the one for the other; and it seems *too true*, that this has been done by all who have persuaded themselves that human reason, as such, is totally perverted; so as to be quite unable to judge concerning good and evil, or things of a religious nature.

Thus much, sir, being premised, I now beg leave to mention those doctrines of your's, to which I principally object, and the ground of my objections.

The

• Your contrary belief seems to have no other support than the notion of *the deceitfulness of human reason*, resulting from the fall, which notion has *nothing* to support it.

The doctrines are, that of the trinity according to Athanasius; the doctrine of original sin; the doctrine of election and reprobation; the doctrine of the satisfaction, and that of imputed righteousness.

The doctrine of the trinity, as Athanasius and you represent it, appears to me utterly *absurd* and *contradictory*: because you represent the father, the son, and the spirit, as three separate *agents*, each of them *God*, each of them *infinite*: and yet you say there is but *one* infinite God. You will not, surely, say the father, son, and spirit, are *not* three separate *agents*; when, at the same time, you assert, that the father *sent* the son into the world, who, in consequence of being so sent, *came* into the world, and *did* and *suffered* what is recorded of him: when, at the same time, you assert also, that the father *sent* the spirit *in the name of the son*, and that the spirit, in consequence of being so sent, *came* into the world, and *convinced* mankind of sin, &c. Surely, sir, you will not say that the *sender* and the *sent*, he who *commands*, and he who *obeys*, are *not* separate *agents*, but the *same**. Here then are three *agents*, each of whom you affirm to be infinite,

* Whenever you declare the son and spirit to be *equal* with the father, you do, in the very terms, acknowledge that their *existence* is *separate* from the father's *existence*. You always conceive of things as *existing separately*, when you think of their *equality*: you cannot help it if you would. But you may *impose* upon yourself.

infinite, each of whom you affirm to be God, and to each of whom, as to the Lord your God, you pay divine worship. Yet you say there is but *one* infinite God. And you say well: but you miserably *contradict* yourself: and (however good your intention may be) you greatly *dishonour* the eternal deity, who is *one infinite agent*.

The doctrine of original sin, (according to you, sir) seems to consist of two parts:—In the first place, *guilt* derived from Adam's transgression upon all his posterity, whereby they are brought under the wrath and curse of God, and are made liable to the torments of hell for ever*:—and, secondly, *the total corruption of their nature*; which is such, that it renders them *sinners by nature*, and *dead* in trespasses and sins; so dead, that they are no more able to do any thing *truly good*, than a dead *corpse* is able to *arise and walk*.

With

* I believe, sir, this is a true representation of this part of your doctrine, which indeed you do not very much insist upon: but I beg leave to enquire why you do not? Why don't you preach several entire sermons to ascertain, illustrate, and enforce it; that so your hearers may know the value of it, being convinced how worthy it is of the *infinitely good God* to torment the posterity of Adam in hell fire for ever, not for *their own*, but for *Adam's* transgression? For my part I think you are obliged in conscience thus to do, as you often profess that you account it your duty to declare *the whole counsel* of God.

With respect to the first of these articles, I would observe, that if we know any thing whatsoever, we know that it is *not just* to punish *one* man for the sin of *another*. If it be asked, "How do you know this?" In return, I ask, how do you know that there is any thing *wrong*, or *inconsistent with justice*, in oppressions, murders, massacres, perjuries, blasphemies? Suppose any one should affirm that these things are very *innocent*. If you thought he deserved any notice, I doubt not you would eagerly contradict him. Yet you could not do it without shewing your inconsistency: for that same reason which declares these things to be *essentially unjust*, is equally clear, full, and positive in declaring the *injustice* of punishing *one* man for the sin of *another*. If this be *right*, there is not the shadow of a reason for thinking those horrid crimes to be *really criminal*. But we *know assuredly*, that oppressions, murders, massacres, perjuries, blasphemies, are really and essentially *criminal*: and, in the same manner, and with equal certainty, we know that to punish *one* man for the sin of *another*, neither is, nor *can* be just*. And, therefore, most sincerely
do

* I have heard you say, sir,—you do not believe that infants are sent into hell. But if they are *punishable* for the sin of their first father, and if they are *actually punished* in some degree why should they not receive *the full punishment* which is due to them? And why was it, when we were talking of this matter, that
you

do I *abhor* the doctrine which ascribes such a conduct to that righteous Being, whom I would always venerate and adore.

With respect to the second article in this doctrine, (viz.) the entire *corruption* of the human nature, whereby men are rendered *sinners by nature*, and utterly *incapacitated* to do any thing which is *truly good*, I would observe, that, if we consider what sin *is*, it will be found a contradiction to say a man is a *sinner by nature*. You may as well say that it is sinful for a man to have two *hands*, or two *feet*, as to say it is
sinful

you seemed *unwilling* to be thought a believer in the damnation of infants? I apprehend you were shocked [for you *started*] at the impious tenet. It was well. The great God intended you should be shocked: and not at this tenet only, but also at several others which you believe and promulge. Indeed, he doth permit it to be otherwise. He endowed us with *liberty* (i. e. freedom of will) that we might be *accountable*. I would just take notice, here, that if we have *no* liberty, if nothing but actual sin can proceed from our nature, as nothing but an impure stream can proceed from an impure fountain; then are actual sinners (as you term them) and infants, upon the very same footing in respect of guilt; for these last were just as able to *prevent* the sin of their *first father*, as the others were to *prevent* what you term *their own* actual sins. I cannot give them that name; because as actual sin cannot subsist without *agency*, so neither without *liberty* can *agency* possibly subsist.

sinful for him to have human *passions*, or any thing else which belongs to him as a man. But then may sin be charged upon him, when he has knowingly and wilfully done the evil which he might have avoided, or *omitted* to do the good which he might have done. Till you can affirm either one or the other of him, you have no authority to call him a sinner. And when through his negligence or bad conduct, he has *corrupted* himself, and *acquired evil habits*, you may say he is a sinful and a wicked creature then, and not before. If this be the true account of sin and sinfulness, a *sinful nature*, as such, is plainly a contradiction. And can you, sir, prove that it is *not* the true account? If you can, I really think there is nothing too hard for you.

But even though it were not *impossible in itself*, that the human nature, as such, should be morally corrupt and sinful; yet, as it is *the work of God*, it must certainly be pure from all sinful stain. You will tell me, perhaps, that it is *not* the work of God: but surely all nature, without exception, is his work. However, you insist upon it, that the first man corrupted himself, and all those who descend from him in the course of nature. But what, I beseech you, is the course of nature? Without God it is *nothing*. By the powerful will of God all things were made: and that *will* is as needful for their *preservation*, as it was for their *production*. "Hitherto the Almighty worketh:" his energy is felt throughout the universe, and the course of nature is the *effect* of that energy.

Summer

Summer and winter, feed-time and harvest, the successive generations of plants and animals, with all the infinite variety of events which take place in the natural world—All these are the *result* of that divine operation which never ceases. Adam could never have left any posterity, if he had not been *empowered* by the will of God to propagate his species. If, then, he communicated a *sinful nature* to his children, he was empowered by the divine will *so to do*. The truth is, every child receives its being and its nature from God, who conveys it by the instrumentality* of the parents; and the divine energy is as much concerned in producing the nature of every child which is born, as it was in producing the nature of the first man. Suppose this energy to *cease*, and you certainly cannot imagine the course of nature to *continue*. Seeing, then, the human nature is *the work of God*, it *cannot* be a sinful nature. And it is worthy of your consideration, sir, that the bible tells us it is *the*

* If a man has done an action which is sinful, it cannot be denied that he was empowered by the divine will *so to do*: yet surely he dares not affirm, that, with respect to this sinful action, he was *nothing more* than the instrument in God's hand. It *depends* on a man whether the nature of his actions shall be sinful or otherwise. It depends *not* on him, whether the nature of his children shall be sinful or otherwise. The nature of his action is *his own work*; the nature of his child is *God's work*.

the express will of God, that the human nature should be *such as it is*: because it acquaints us, that, *after the flood*, this command was delivered, "be fruitful and multiply."

The doctrine of election and reprobation asserts that, while a small part of mankind was, from eternity, *predestinated* to enjoy everlasting happiness in the heavenly world, the greater part by far was also *predestinated*, by the same gracious God, to suffer everlasting torments in hell fire.

That any man, whose understanding is not entirely *ruined*, should believe this doctrine, would be to me a matter of the greatest astonishment, if I were not yet more astonished to think, that it is believed by some who do really venerate their maker. If it doth not carry its own refutation along with it, it must be owned there is little hope of its being refuted. However, I would observe two things in relation to it. First, that if any one were about to utter the most horrid blasphemy against the ever blessed God, he would be put to it to invent any thing worse, *in kind*, than what is contained in this doctrine. Should he take the hint from it to affirm, that God *predestinated* all the creatures which he *hath* made, or in future *will* make, to suffer *everlasting torments*: this would be only a greater degree of the same *kind* of blasphemy. In the next place, I would take notice, that, when you say, "although
" the great God hath, prior to their existence, pre-

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" *destinated*

“ *destinated and decreed* the greatest part of mankind
 “ to suffer everlasting torments in hell, he is, never-
 “ theless, infinitely *good and gracious*.” I have good
 reason to think, that your heart *recoils*, and flatly
denies what you utter with your tongue, though you
strive hard to believe it. I ask you, seriously, sir, is
 not such the fact? And do not you impute it to the
natural wickedness of your heart? I have no desire
 that you should answer me: but you will not do
 amiss, perhaps, in delivering your answer to him
 who *made you*, and made you *what you are*; that you
 might naturally *shudder* at this horrid tenet, as you
 naturally *shudder* at the most atrocious and shocking
 crimes.

The doctrine of the satisfaction is this; that Christ
 died *in the room and stead* of sinners, suffering a
 punishment equivalent to what was due to them, and
 thereby satisfied the law and justice of God. Now
 what do we understand by these words, punishment,
 law, justice? *Pain* and *punishment* seem to be very
 different things. The brute animals *suffer*, but are
not punished: for then, only, is a being punished,
 when he *suffers for sin charged upon him*. Law, in
 the present case, I take it to be an *authoritative edict*,
 prescribing to, and enjoining upon, *its own subjects*
 right conduct, and denouncing a penalty against dis-
 obedience. Justice is the same as righteousness; it
 is eternal and immutable. Whatever is just and
 right, is such in its own nature, it was always such,
 and

and such it must remain for ever. Likewise, whatever is unjust and wrong, is so in itself, eternally and immutably. The great God, who is omniscient, knows *all* that is right or wrong: and he, of his abundant goodness, hath made us capable of the same knowledge, *as far as is needful and proper for us*. He hath made us thus capable, in that he hath made us reasonable beings. As such, we understand and know, that, to practice obedience to our maker's will, is *right*. We understand and know, it is *right* for a child, who has it in his power, to relieve and support an aged parent in distress. And if a person return evil for good, we understand and know this to be *wrong*. And whatever it be which reason pronounces, with the same clearness, to be either just or unjust, *such it is*. Every man must grant this, unless he will grant—he has *no reason* to think that to be just or unjust, which yet he *does* think to be so: I mean every man who allows the *existence* of justice and injustice. There was always a righteousness proper for every rational being existing, or designed to exist. This the ever blessed deity saw, and contemplated from everlasting. This is what I understand by eternal and immutable justice. It is founded on the *circumstances* and *relations* of beings. To instance among ourselves of the human race:—Should a man be either a father or a son, his being so related as he is, makes it just and right for him to do what does not belong to a person who is without children, or who has lost his parents. So riches, knowledge, wit, and

power, make a certain conduct to be just and right for their several possessors, which *cannot* be right for persons *differently circumstanced*. We have now, I believe, got the true meaning of the terms in question. But if law be such as hath been said, how shall its demands be satisfied? It is exceeding plain, that they never can otherwise than by a *compliance* with what is demanded. The law requires of its *own subjects* this alternative, "*obey, or suffer the penalty.*" Now, in either case, there is *compliance*, and, consequently *satisfaction*. But if they neither *obey*, nor *suffer the penalty*, there is *no compliance*, and, consequently, *no satisfaction*. It signifies nothing to say, that some person obeyed *in their stead*, or suffered *in their stead*. Neither the obedience nor the suffering of this person is what the law demands: each is *something else*: it is *no compliance*, and therefore *cannot* be satisfaction. If you were to require *one* thing of me, and I were to give you *another*, it could never be said that I had *satisfied your demand*. You, indeed, may be satisfied with something different from what you required: *you* may be changed. But, if the *law* be changed, it will not be the law which we are considering. Indeed, it was never supposed to be changed.—It should be remembered, however, that nothing can be more extravagant than to affirm any law to be *satisfied*, while its demands remain *unsatisfied*: and that these can only be satisfied by a *compliance* with what is demanded: and that, as the obedience and sufferings of Christ are *no such* compliance with what

the

the law of God demands, (which is the obedience or suffering of *its own subjects*) therefore Christ *hath not* satisfied the law of God, in the room and stead of sinners.

And that justice cannot be satisfied by the vicarious punishment of an innocent person, is sufficiently evident from this one consideration---that justice absolutely *forbids* to punish the innocent. This you acknowledge, when you say (in regard to sickness and pain) that infants would not be *punished*, if they were not *guilty*. However, you say, that as Christ *consented* to endure punishment, that *consent* rendered him in *justice punishable*. Did it then *take away* his innocence? Did it render him properly *criminal*? If not; how then could it make him *punishable*? Will you affirm, that it is in the *nature* of such consent so to do? And that *any* one who *consents* to be punished, is *punishable in justice*? Sure you will not. But if you do, I must contradict you, and declare, that a being is *not* punishable on account of his *consent*, but only on account of his *crime*. It is really wonderful, that people should imagine justice might be *satisfied* by what is a *violation* of justice.

With respect to the doctrine of imputed righteousness, (*viz.*) that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to men, so as to become *their* righteousness;---I would observe, that to impute or reckon to me what is not mine, is *wrong* imputation, or *wrong* reckoning; it is declaring a thing *to be* what it *is not*. Moreover, it

is impossible to make that right conduct *which I never performed*, to become *truly mine*, merely by *declaring* it so to be. Suppose a person in great affliction be by some other person relieved, and made easy and happy; and suppose it should be generally reported that you relieved this distressed person, when you are conscious that you have *not* done it: it is then imputed and reckoned to you: but it is a *wrong* imputation; and it is plainly and utterly impossible that this *deed* should become *your* deed. Let who will *declare* it so to be, the matter is not altered hereby; and such declaration must inevitably be *untrue*. There are some who understand this doctrine somewhat differently from what I have defined it to be; but you, sir, I think, do not. Indeed, I take yours to be the true and proper idea of the doctrine: for if a person *only derive benefit* from Christ's righteousness, there is *no* imputation in the case*.

I really shudder to reflect on the counterpart of this doctrine—the imputation of the sins of men to the blessed son of God. But if you be a consistent believer in imputed righteousness, you *must* believe in such imputation of sins. Indeed, I hope you are not consistent; for, if you be, you can have no objection

* You believe (if I do not misunderstand you) that if a man be *approved* of God, it is not on account of *his own righteousness*, but on account of *the righteousness of Christ*, with which the man is *adorned*, as with a glorious robe.

objection to that horrid assertion, which I dare say you are not unacquainted with (*viz.*) that the great God turned away his face from his expiring son as from *an abominable object*. This tenet is by no means compatible with the idea of the *innocent* enduring punishment instead of the *guilty*: but I am not surprised at the inconsistency.

Yet all these doctrines, you think, are warranted by the word of God. And do you really think, sir, that the sacred word can warrant such doctrines as these? I think myself well authorised to declare them absurd, impossible, impious—and, therefore, *false*. If you deny the charge, you should prove the contrary: which if you do, you will perform great and eminent service for the cause in which you are embarked. Till this is effected, either by you or somebody else, I must think it is not doing the word of God much real honour, to say, as you do, that these doctrines are not only warranted by it, but are the principal and most excellent doctrines which it delivers to us. I sincerely bless God, that he hath taught me to put a much better, and a more natural interpretation upon his word, which has been lamentably obscured by the glosses of both ill-meaning and well-meaning persons. And, as I esteem the revelation which God has given us in the scriptures to be an invaluable treasure, I am very sorry to see it so sadly perverted, as to be made to countenance opinions which are a reproach to religion. Such
opinions

opinions (pardon me, sir,) I must hear, and little else, if I attend upon your ministry. I must hear the most unworthy and degrading representations of the glorious deity, and, what is still worse, I must hear injustice and cruelty charged indirectly upon him who is perfectly just and infinitely benevolent. I must hear another, represented as *equal* to him who is declared to be "the ONLY true God;" and who himself hath, in his own person, said---"I am God, and there is none else." I must hear prayers, (in which I would not join for the whole world) wherein penitent confession is made to him who created and formed us of a *sinful nature*, and a *heart naturally full of wickedness*: I must hear this confession, instead of a devout thanksgiving for those intelligent and moral faculties, whereby we are made capable of religious and heavenly felicity. And I must hear praise and thanks ascribed to the ever blessed God, for satisfying justice by that which his soul must utterly abhor---by *the punishment* of his holy, and innocent, and beloved son, &c. &c. Sir, I am *shocked* and *grieved* to hear these things.

I have a little more to add, and I have done. I cannot help observing a very remarkable difference between your preaching, and that of many whose principles are a good deal similar to your own. These persons judging, that although men are naturally corrupt, they are *moral* agents still; and judging, moreover, that the gospel hath revealed nothing more
plainly

plainly than this truth ;—" that the present state is a
 " state of *trial* and *discipline*, having respect to
 " another state, where we are to be dealt with, ac-
 " cording to our behaviour in this ;"—they do gene-
 rally explain and enforce those *duties* which are re-
 quired of us, insisting on the various arguments and
 motives drawn from the nature of things, as well as
 those peculiar to the gospel. Now, it is true, sir, I
 have heard you acknowledge, that the present state
 is a state of trial ; but your preaching totally *excludes*
 this truth : for you deny the moral agency of
 mankind ; affirming, that men are no more able to
 do any thing *truly good*, than a dead *corpse* is able to
 arise and walk ; and one great part of your business
 is to describe the *misery* and *sinfulness* of this which
 you call our *natural state*. Instead of counselling
 your hearers (as was the apostle Paul's manner) to
 " labour that they may be accepted of God : because
 " we must all appear before the judgment-seat of
 " Christ, that every one may receive the things done
 " in his body, according to what he hath done,
 " whether it be good or bad : " you tell them that,
 if they have the smallest portion of *true grace* (which,
 you aver to be sovereign, *i. e.* arbitrary) they shall
 certainly be saved ; but if they are never so happy as
 to be made partakers of this *grace* (which, being
 sovereign, doth not at all depend upon any thing they
 can do) they must inevitably be lost. That is—those
 who are lost, are lost *for want of grace* ; and not be-
 cause

cause they *did* the evil which they *might have avoided*, and *omitted* to do the good which they *might have done**. You tell them, further, that they must never expect to *recommend* themselves to God by any thing they can perform. A piece of doctrine which doth not seem to correspond very well, either with the passage just quoted, or with the exhortation of the same apostle, addressed to the Thessalonians, as follows—" We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to *please* God, so ye would abound more and more." And yet it must be owned, that you express great disapprobation of the conduct of such as think to be accepted of God, *without* the practice of what is good. I look upon this as a very *happy* inconsistency, resulting from the principles of that nature, which (however you may depreciate and vilify it) is *the excellent workmanship* of God, his rich and invaluable gift.

A manner of preaching so very opposite to this leading doctrine of the gospel—that we shall be dealt with according to our behaviour in the present state of *trial* and *discipline*---appears to me so contrary to the intention of preaching, that it is not likely I should

* You may possibly say, with some, that wicked men can abstain from evil, and do good, if they *will*; while yet you affirm they *cannot* will. But surely a man cannot *do* what he cannot *will* to do. To tell him he can, is to insult him.

should receive much benefit from it : especially it is not likely, as I consider it liable to the preceding objections.

And now, sir, I have given you my reasons for non-attendance upon your ministry. It is not because I have a *dislike* to public worship. So far from it, I cannot help thinking it a misfortune to be thus debarred from what I esteem a great and desirable privilege. I should rejoice to join with my fellow-christians in such worship as I think agreeable to the true spirit of christianity : but were I to join with *you*, I should, *in many instances*, wrong my conscience : and in barely giving attendance, I cannot avoid being *hurt*, more or less, by what I hear. When I do attend, I endeavour to make the most of what I approve, join in the worship where I *can*, and pay a particular regard to your sincerity and upright meaning. If it should be asked, why I attended constantly so long ; I did it, because I was afraid of setting a bad example, or rather what might be so construed. But, on further consideration, there seems no great reason to fear this, as it is well known, that I do not make the day a day of *pleasure* : and I hope, and am persuaded, that my absence is not suspected to proceed from a *disregard to religion*.

In this letter, sir, I have not scrupled to declare my sentiments of your opinions with a great deal of *frankness* : you may possibly think, *too much*. But the case required it. And I doubt not you would have

have been as free with my principles, if you had written to me on the subject.---I had in view the honour of God, and the christian religion, as well as the justification of my own conduct. I assure you, that I neither intended, nor do intend, any thing like hostility: for, however much I may think you *mistaken*, as a man I esteem and respect you; and have not designedly failed to *show* my respect upon proper occasions, when you were either present or absent. I now beg leave to offer you my best wishes, and subscribe myself,

Reverend sir,

Your real friend,

and very humble servant.

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